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LABOR GROUPS CONDEMN GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY

PY090228 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0111 GMT 9 Feb 79 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 8 Feb (NA)--The Commission of 25 and the National Labor Commission [CNT], the two groups which claim themselves to be the representatives of the organized labor movement, today through different communiques condemned the government's economic policy. The declarations issued by the Commission of 25 and the CNT were disclosed almost simultaneously at the end of separate meetings held today by the respective authorities.

The Commission of 25, which held a plenum at a Buenos Aires union headquarters, decided "to reassert our firm opposition to the present economic policy implemented by the team led by Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz as a tool against the interests of the labor class. The increase of 12.8 percent in the cost of living in January clearly shows that in only 1 month, workers lost 8.8 percent of their purchasing power, and this is based on official statistics."

Using similar terms the CNT also reasserted its "disagreement with the salary policy," and decided to call a meeting of the CNT national leadership, which is comprised of representatives of 33 organizations, to be held on 15 February at 1600 "to establish a position in view of the deterioration of the situation."

The leaders of the 25 also decided "to reassert their support for the full enforcement of the professional association laws and public works and to reject any modifications which would undermine the interests of workers." Furthermore, they decided "as members of the community to continue and improve the contacts between the labor movement and any other institution or sector representing national interests."

The declaration issued by the Commission of 25 demands "an explanation of the kidnapings of union leaders Smith, Casaretto and Di Pasquale," and states that the commission "will launch a campaign at the national level to find out about these kidnapings through special commissions.

UCR CRITICIZES 'LACK OF REALISM' IN ECONOMIC POLICY

PY092127 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1114 GMT 9 Feb 79 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 9 Feb (NA)--Radical Civic Union (UCR) President Ricardo Balbin has released a paper which severely criticizes the situation in the country at the end of 1978, and at the same time proposes several short-term measures to improve the situation.

The paper furthermore states that the trend of January prices "clearly shows the lack of realism" in the economic plan for the first 8 months of the year disclosed by Economy Minister Jose Martinez de Hoz.

Balbin indicates that in the next few months Argentina will be "facing a stark reality: either the changes announced (in the 8-month economic plan) fail to take place, or, if they do take place, there will be a worsening of the recession." He adds that "in either of the two cases it will be one more step toward the dead end resulting from the policy applied since April 1976."

Balbin's paper is based on information supplied by a party commission whose coordinators were economist Enrique Garcia Vazquez and politician Ruben Rabanal. According to the paper the trend of January prices "clearly" shows the lack of realism in the official economic plan for the first 8 months of the year.

The paper states that "it is very dangerous to continue blaming the current problems of the Argentine economy on the economic chaos prevailing in March 1976." The paper also believes that it is a mistake to blame the problems on the lack of understanding of workers and businessmen. It emphasizes that "the cooperation received from the various sectors has been outstanding, to the extent of sacrificing personal interests."

The Radicals believe that "the total failure of the current economic leadership is due entirely to its faulty guidelines which are totally alien to the national and international economic reality." They add that "therefore, it is necessary to review these faulty guidelines and to correct them immediately, thus avoiding worse damage to the country." The Radical paper emphasizes that even though the exact figures are still not known, "it can be estimated that in 1978 economic activity declined 3 percent and the industrial sector declined 7 percent as compared to 1977." It adds that "the situation is very bad if we take into account the decline experienced in 1975 and 1976, and it forces us to go back to 1974 for a comparable production level." The paper indicates that "aside from Peru and Nicaragua--which have valid economic reasons for the recession they have experienced--Argentina is the only country whose production declined in 1978."

Later on the paper adds that "the sacrifice of having fewer per capita goods today than that of 5 years ago has not been shared equitably," and stresses that "the heaviest burden of the recession is being borne by the most needy sectors of the population," while a minority, mainly related to financial activities of various kinds, has had its real income grow completely out of proportion to the [words indistinct] of the economic policy in force, which, according to the Radicals, are:

--Concentration of income in the hands of small sectors of high-saving capability so that these savings are turned into investment.

--The implementation of the subsidiary role of the state, which has yielded contradictory results because no reduction in the size of the public sector in relation to the GDP has been achieved, while state action has decreased or totally withdrawn from basic sectors of the national economy.

--Excessive attempts to obtain excellent results through the utilization of market laws alone, without taking into account the oligopolistic factors which are part of the nature of Argentina's economy.

--The above guideline has resulted in an imprudent opening of the economy that has let into the country certain goods which "are destroying similar national industries."

--The implementation of a monetary policy in which true economy is overruled by financial economy, a situation which has paradoxically led the financially-oriented economic leadership to "increase the amount of currency to unprecedented levels."

In conclusion the paper lists measures the Radicals believe necessary to change the sitation. Among them is the improvement of national income distribution by means of regulations which would result in "an orderly and sustained increase of workers' salaries." It also proposes a national campaign "with a trustworthy technical basis and broad information to improve the level of 25 percent of the population having a very low income, which does not amount to even 5 percent of the overall national income." Finally it advocates a tax reform which would broaden the bases for taxation, "strong measures to reinstate a monetary economy in the country," and a "broad reform of the financial sector, returning to the system of minimum cash differential [efectivos minimos diferenciales] that prevailed up to the 1973 reform."

REPORTS ON RESUMING RELATIONS WITH CHILE DENIED

PY130250 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0135 GMT 13 Feb 79 PY

[Text] La Paz, 12 Feb (LATIN)--Bolivian Foreign Minister Raul Botelho Gonsalvez today rejected the possibility of resuming diplomatic relations with Chile, denying news reports in this regard. "It is not appropriate to contemplate a resumption of diplomatic relations with Chile under current circumstances," Botelho Gonsalvez said at the end of a meeting with President of the government military junta Gen David Padilla Arancibia. The foreign minister added that "there is no reason to speak about this. The government has already adopted a position in this regard." He indicated that the reports on a possible Bolivian decision to reestablish diplomatic relations with Chile "have surprised the president and Foreign Ministry officials."

PADILLA TO ATTEND ANDEAN PACT SUMMIT IN MAY

PY081409 La Paz INFOBOL Diplomatic Information Service in Spanish 0747 GMT 8 Feb 79 PY

[Excerpt] Gen David Padilla Arancibia confirmed that he would attend the meeting of presidents of the member countries of the Cartagena Pact to be held in Colombia in May. He said that Bolivia cannot isolate itself from this process of integration. During this meeting, several projects will be approved and they will conduct an evaluation of the effects of the programs which the Andean group is now undertaking, especially those concerning the automotive plan and the light metal industry.

The conclave will also approve the establishment of an Andean court of justice, a project being formulated by a committee comprised of representatives from the five member countries. The main objective of this organization is to insure the observance of binational and international agreements, as well as to oversee agreements concerning quotas for the nations which comprise the Andean group.

WORKERS DISMISSED FOR POLITICAL-UNION REASONS REINSTATED

PY130110 La Paz Radio Cruz del Sur Network in Spanish 2330 GMT 12 Feb 79 PY

[Text] The military junta government, through a legal provision, has authorized the reinstatement of all workers dismissed for political-union related reasons during the administration of Gen Hugo Banzer. This measure was approved at a meeting of the Council of Ministers.

Article 1 of the decree states: The reinstatement is hereby ordered of all workers dismissed for political or union related reasons since 21 August 1971 by industrial, mining, commercial, transport, banking, consulting enterprises and so forth. Article 2 states that only those persons who are now unemployed will be eligible for reinstatement. Article 3 says that all reinstated workers will receive the pay they were earning at the time of their dismissal plus all wage increases granted thereafter.

The Bolivian Labor Central [COB] has charged that more than 100 workers dismissed for union-political related reasons have not yet been reinstated in their jobs in the country, a fact which has caused serious problems for their families. COB leaders have also reported that some reinstated workers are neither receiving the same pay they were earning at the time of their dismissal, nor the subsequent wage increases.

As a result of this governmental decree, all unilateral actions taken by businessmen will be automatically repealed.

RECOGNITION OF KHOMEYNI GOVERNMENT IMMINENT

PY131020 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0235 GMT 13 Feb 79 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 12 Feb (LATIN)--It was officials reported here today that Brazil will recognize the new Iranian Government "immediately" after being officially informed that it controls power and about the constitution of the ministerial cabinet. Luis Felipe Lampreia, the official Brazilian Foreign Ministry spokesman, stated that Brazil, according to its current policy, will immediately recognize the government of Ayatollah Khomeyni as soon as these requirements are fulfilled.

VENEZUELAN DELEGATION MEETS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

PY122028 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1652 GMT 12 Feb 79 PY

[Text] Brasilia, 12 Feb (LATIN)--The chief of a high-level delegation sent to this capital by Venezuelan president-elect Luis Herrera Campins stated today that Brazil is "especially significant" for Venezuelan relations. The Venezuelan delegation, headed by Alberto Zambrano, coordinator between Herrera Campins and the Foreign Ministry, today began a number of meetings with several officials in the current and future Government of Brazil. The delegation was termed by Zambrano as one of "friendship, courtesy and good will" with which Herrera "wants to express Brazil's great importance and very special significance within the framework of relations among our American states and the world."

The visiting delegation met here this morning with Brazilian Foreign Minister Antonio Azeredo da Silveira, with this successor Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro and with the chiefs of the various Foreign Ministry departments. This afternoon the delegation held meetings with current and future Brazilian ministers of the economic and trade sectors, and these meetings will continue tomorrow. The delegation will then leave for Rio de Janeiro to meet with businessmen, representatives of the Brazilian State Petroleum Company and reporters.

According to Zambrano, the delegation he is heading constitutes "an expression of affection and interest" by Herrera Campins toward Brazil. The objective of this delegation is to make known to the Brazilian Government beforehand the principles which will guide the international policy of the future Venezuelan president, Zambrano stated. He said that those principles of Latin American unity, of intensifying integration processes, will be guided by the Venezuelan international policy of respect for the ideological pluralism and the democratic nationalism that, in addition to the ideas of social justice and the universal common good, will have to contribute to the fundamental objectives of Herrera's government. He indicated that Venezuela has profound respect for the principles of self-determination for the peoples and, "as an essentially democratic country, sympathetically observes the gestures of a (political) opening which has sprung forth from the initiative of its neighbors."

SECOND-ECHELON ITAMARATY OFFICIALS ASKED TO REMAIN

PY081406 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 7 Feb 79 p 2 PY

[Text] Future Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro has already invited all chiefs of departments in Itamaraty--11 diplomats--to remain in their posts for at least the first 6 months of General Figueiredo's government. This decision to maintain the entire second echelon of the Foreign Ministry has a simple explanation: the lack of vacancies abroad in which the main members of Azeredo da Silveira's team could be accommodated.

DISSENTING OFFICERS ASSESSING ATTITUDES TOWARD FIGUEIREDO

FY122311 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 9 Feb 79 p 5 FY

[Excerpt] Skepticism as to the successful course of democratic liberalization under the Figueiredo government prevails among military leaders who were opposed to the president-elect at the time when the presidential succession was the topic of the day. Despite their opposition, however, they believe that the movement of reconciliation suggested by Figueiredo should not be ignored as long as accepting this offer does not mean surrendering positions. And because they are concerned about the process of liberalization and the possibility of administrative distortions, those military leaders might address a public letter to General Figueiredo during the week of his presidential inauguration "in a spirit of patriotism, democracy, honesty and generosity." This is one of the moves being discussed in meetings of old military dissidents who are today trying to chart the course to follow.

The practical consequence of their concern is the decision to maintain the organization they had put together during the presidential succession affair to be able to react to possible steps toward institutional radicalization on the part of the present government (a possibility which did not materialize). With its ranks numerically thinned out today--since many old adherents and associates accommodated themselves to the idea of waiting for the actions of the president-elect, who is presenting himself as a conciliator--the organization's principal supporters maintain the same posture: They will neither agitate nor provoke, but they do not believe General Figueiredo will succeed in transforming the country into a real democracy. They believe General Figueiredo will be forced to pull in the reins and then turn backwards. So they remain on the alert with the conviction that the question is not to oppose personalities, but to keep watch over commitments to ideas and principles.

This group, composed of the army's high-ranking officers, is most concerned over the morale of their colleagues more closely and directly connected with General Figueiredo. These colleagues are showing some dismay over the attitude with which the former chief of the National Intelligence Service assumed the commitment to broaden democratic privileges in their classical sense. As far as that attitude can be perceived by circles close to the president-elect, Figueiredo can be relieved of the suspicion that some time he performed differently for different sectors of the public, posing as a democrat for convenience. Some officers who followed the development of Figueiredo's thinking for the past 2 years are convinced that if he was cautious and even ambiguous at some time, he did so not for convenience, but because he was facing political and military crises which anybody could see, and also because he was going through a process of personal transformation despite his statements to journalists that he was "to old to change ideas." At present, in fact, some generals who struggle for Figueiredo and who continue to give him unrestricted loyalty no longer hide their concern in private conversations about the risk which the so-called liberalizations might pose for national security. According to some analysts, the Costa e Silva history may repeat itself. He was the defender of a "soft line" and at a given moment saw himself caught in the web of military pressure in the wake of a political crisis which ended in street demonstrations and terrorism in 1968. He then had to yield to a combination of forces which slipped from his control.

This possibility leads the remnants of the military dissidents to act cautiously since Figueiredo may yet become a circumstantial ally if he continues to resist any institutional restriction. Nevertheless, this military group feels dutybound to draw its position once more in the face of possible outcomes regarding the present situation. Talks are now underway among different sectors of officers on the significance of attitudes recently expressed at the political and the army's administrative levels.

FLOODS CAUSING EXTENSIVE DAMAGE; RELIEF MEASURES TAKEN

Floods Causing Widespread Damage

PY091956 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1648 GMT 9 Feb 79 PY

[By Juan Javier Zeballos]

[Excerpt] Brasilia, 9 Feb (LATIN)--It was officially acknowledged here today that the tragic floods rampant in the east-central region of the country, leaving hundreds dead and hundreds of thousands homeless, might affect four other northeastern states if the heavy rains which have been falling persist.

Paulo Marques dos Santos, professor of the Astronomic and Geophysical Institute of the University of Sao Paulo, has indicated that the floods experienced by the central area of Brazil are "the worst in the last 150 years."

According to official information, the floods caused by the heavy rains which have been falling in the area for the past 40 days have resulted in 300 deaths and have left almost 300,000 people homeless, in addition to destroying bridges, roads and crops. Newspapers report that the floods have killed between 500 and 700 people.

Situation Grave in Four States

PY101856 Paris AFP in Spanish 1659 GMT 10 Feb 79 PY

[Excerpt] Rio de Janeiro, 10 Feb (AFP)--Although the rains have diminished in intensity and have ceased altogether in some areas, the situation is still grave in the states of Minas Gerais, Espiritu Santo, Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, whose desperate and hungry populations are fighting over bread.

The floods, caused by the torrential rains which have struck souteastern Brazil, particularly the states of Minas Gerais and Espiritu Santo, and which lasted 45 days without a letup, have left a tragic toll of more than 1,500 dead and 600,000 homeless, according to statistics published today by the Brazilian press.

Officials assert that these figures are exaggerated, but they admit that the situaton is rather serious in Minas Gerais and Espiritu Santo.

Observers have expressed the opinion, however, that the officials themelves are giving contradictory figures in an attempt to control the panic among those affected by the floods.

Government Implements Relief Measures

PY131312 Sao Paulo Cadeia Verde Amarela in Portuguese 1000 GMT 13 Feb 79 PY

[Excerpts] The opening of a 50-million cruzeiros line of credit was approved in order to cover emergency expenditures caused by the floods in eastern Brazil. The line of credit was approved by President Geisel after a 2-hour meeting with the interior minister. During the meeting, Minister Rangel Reis briefed President Geisel on the situation of cities which are located along the lower course of the San Francisco River.

The Brazilian Economy Council [CBE] will meet the day after tomorrow to establish the amount of resources which will be allocated to repair the damages caused by the floods. The CBE will also take this opportunity to discuss the oil supply situation in light of the events in Iran.

FORMER COMPTROLLER GENERAL REFUTES CHARGES

PA081401 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0507 GMT 8 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Quito, 7 Feb (EFE)--Former Ecuadorean Comptroller General Luis Hidalgo today refuted charges voiced against him by Natural Resources and Energy Minister Gen Eduardo Semblantes, who is involved in a case of irregular petroleum exports by Texaco. The comptroller resigned last Monday after being accused of being "legalistic and disloyal" to the government and "publicity hungry" by top officials of the Resources Ministry and the Ecuadorean State Petroleum Corporation [CEPE].

Hidalgo had to resort to a paid communique in the press today to answer the attacks. He noted that the audit establishing an excess of about 4.8 million barrels of petroleum exported by Texaco--which were authorized by Minister Semblantes--was only one of the many prepared by the comptroller's office that were not challenged because they were effected in compliance with the office's duties. The only difference, he said, is that this one is related to officers and irregularities involving hundreds of millions of sucres.

In response to charges that he served the interests of transnational firms, Hidalgo demonstrated that the audit showed that CEPE is owed $16.7 million by Texaco for excess exports.

The U.S. petroleum firm and Minister Semblantes have until 31 March to refute the charges formulated against them jointly by the comptroller's office. In the meantime, the governing military triumvirate has accepted Hidalgo's resignation.

SOVIET TRADE OFFICIAL REPORTS PURCHASES

PA041421 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1230 GMT 4 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Vasily Zadorozhnyy, chief Soviet trade representative in Quito, has reported that Soviet purchases from Ecuador have amounted to 1.875 billion sucres ($75 million) over the past 10 years. He made the disclosure during the signing of a contract for the purchase of 147 million sucres worth of bananas. The contract was signed by officials of the (Reyvanpack) enterprise and the Soviet Soyuzplodoimport firm. The contract calls for the sale of 37,000 tons of bananas to the USSR. The Soviet official said that over the 10 years of developing trade with Ecuador, the USSR has bought approximately 200,000 tons of bananas worth 550 million sucres ($22 million). This figure gives an idea of the importance of the latest contract for 147 million sucres ($5.88 million).

AIR FORCE PURCHASES 6 MIRAGE PLANES FROM FRANCE

PA120250 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0205 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Quito, 11 Feb (EFE)--The newspaper EL TELEGRAFO, dean of the Ecuadorean press, reported today that the Ecuadorean Air Force (FAE) has acquired six Mirage airplanes for its squadron. The newspaper indicated that the six airplanes, which will increase the FAE's operational capacity, were acquired in France and will arrive in Quito next week. It added that the planes have the most sophisticated technical innovations for military actions of any kind, and that they have calculation instruments which facilitate and alleviate the work of the pilot and the gunners. The newspaper added that each of the Mirage planes costs about $2 million, to which must be added the money that must be spent on their equipment, maintenance and operation. It reported that the planes will take off from Bordeaux on the French Atlantic coast. They will be flown by French pilots, who will stay in Ecuador for the duration of a technical training course for Ecuadorean personnel.

HAYA DE LA TORRE NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT

PA112006 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1853 GMT 11 Feb 79 PA

[Excerpt] Lima, 11 Feb (EFE)--The Aprist Party, considered the largest electoral force in Peru, today nominated its leader and present constituent Assembly president, Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, for the presidency. Haya de la Torre will soon be 84 years old. The announcement was made by the party Secretary General Armando Villanueva who said that APRA [American Revolutionary Popular Alliance] is willing to make alliances "but within its democratic left line."

PCP SIGNS JOINT STATEMENTS CONDEMNING SRV AGGRESSION

OW091959 Beijing XINHUA in English 1936 GMT 9 Feb 79 OW

[Text] Lima, February 8 (XINHUA)--The Communist Party of Peru [PCP] recently signed separate joint statements with the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) of Argentina and the Communist Party of Sweden, censuring Viet Nam for its Soviet-backed aggression against Democratic Kampuchea, according to the latest issue of "PATRIA ROJA," organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Peru.

In their joint statement, the Peruvian and Argentine parties expressed their support for "Democratic Kampuchea, suffering from the Vietnamese aggression instigated and advanced by the Soviet social-imperialists." The statement said, "The cause of the Kampuchean people is just and has won support from peoples all over the world." It continued that the Vietnamese aggressors "are sure to be smashed by the Kampuchean people."

The joint statement by the Peruvian and Swedish parties pointed out, "The Soviet Union not only uses Cuba as a tool for its social-imperialist expansion, but also backs the Vietnamese aggression against Kampuchea." The statement expressed support for Kampuchea in its struggle against aggression and the Soviet-backed Vietnamese regional expansionism. In the statement, the two parties also called for "the withdrawal of Soviet nuclear weapons from the Baltic Sea and from around the north European countries."

EXPRESO COMMENTS ON SECURITY, FREEDOM OF PRESS

PA110027 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 6 Feb 79 p 10 PA

[Reprint of unattributed articles which appeared in previous issues of EXPRESO]

[Text] National Security

Through investigation and analysis, it has become evident that the Peruvian Air Force (FAP) is the object of a systematic campaign to discredit it, in which foreigners are involved.

The purpose of this campaign is to diminish the defense capability of our air force, since the enemies of Peru are aware of its military power, its capacity, its firmness and its fighting spirit, characteristics of all the branches of our armed forces.

The same sinister plot against the FAP is beginning to be carried out also against our glorious navy and national army, against our armed forces in general.

However, the campaign against the FAP goes back further and is more intense. Systematic campaigns to discredit it are in fact being waged to tarnish its image.

Some of the most notorious efforts being made in this regard are:

--The campaign unleashed against the purchase of Mirage airplanes during the administration of former President Fernando Belaunde Terry;

--The vicious campaign that has been carried out against the purchase of Soviet material (SU-22 airplanes, Antonov helicopters and an antiaircraft defense system).

An effort was made through these campaigns to predispose the people against the FAP, either by providing false information or distorting the facts. These are some cases: Abad Saldarriaga Vargas Garayar, attacks against the FAP's intelligence system, the Tri-Star case, the Thorndike case and so forth.

Specifically, Chile's intelligence organizations have been carrying out espionage and psychological warfare. The Vargas Garayar case and the arrest of the crew of the Chilean ship "Beagle" and the case of the secretary of Chile's naval attache provide proof of espionage.

With regard to psychological warfare, the so-called "Abad case" is evidence of the extent to which news can be distorted and magnified to affect the morale of FAP personnel in general and of the personnel of the powerful Air Group No 11 in particular.

In this matter, the government believes that certain news media are issuing statements that clearly affect the nation's sovereignty and prestige, thus constituting an attack against national security.

Considering that the state has an obligation to watch over the nation's security, the government on the 23rd of this month issued Law No 22437, stating the decision "to suspend news organs acting against it."

As a result of the application of this drastic measure, the magazine "CARETAS" has just been suspended.

Since the charges are so serious, it is necessary for the government to hand over to the judicial branch the cases in which the law has been broken and precepts of the constitution of the republic trampled. The right to freedom of the press and the country's security, which is fundamental, demand it. (EXPRESO, 28 January 1979)

The News Media and the Law

The foiled Marxist strike last week resulted in the government's adoption of a series of measures aimed at maintaining public order and preventing any act of violence. However, there is no justification for the closing of seven political weeklies on the grounds that they had been acting subversively. If that were the case, the parties responsible should have been brought before the judicial branch and the appropriate law applied. The news media law guarantees freedom of expression, and the government should be the first one to provide an example of respect for that law. The closing of opposition news organs precisely when the revolutionary government is completing the schedule of democratic institutionalization harms the country's prestige and image. It is completely true that some of these magazines promote ideologies that repudiate freedom of expression, but democracy must take the risk of listening even to enemies of the system. If one's mind is clear, those enemies will never become the majority. (EXPRESO, 14 January 1979)

EXCELSIOR COMMENTS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S UPCOMING VISIT

PA122147 Paris AFP in Spanish 1930 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 12 Feb (AFP)--The profits "amassed at the cost of someone else's pain constitute the debts of the rich, and these will be paid someday," notes the editorial of the newspaper EXCELSIOR today in discussing President Jimmy Carter's visit here, which begins on Wednesday.

The U.S. President will spend 3 days in Mexico. During this period he will hold a number of talks with Mexican President Jose Lopez-Portillo.

"It is a virtue of good negotiators," the papers adds, "to conceal the magnitude of the needs burdening them." According to the newspaper, "Mexico cannot sidestep its economic problems and neither can the United States conceal its urgent need to insure sources of hydrocarbons."

"But the other dangers that the abyss in the our relations entail for our northern neighbor should also be considered." EXCELSIOR notes: "That abyss is deep because of the enormous difference between the economic development of the most powerful nation on earth and its neighbor, which is overpopulated, has large marginated sectors and a high percentage of inhabitants who lack the basic things in life."

"To begrudge economic elements to Mexico," the newspaper continues, "in exchange for its natural wealth and its agricultural, livestock or manufactured products is the worst deal that the United States could make."

"Nothing benefits them more than our country's progress. The more we grow in numbers without resolving our most pressing needs, the worse prospect we will represent for them. Whatever profits they take from us will in the end be drawn, as antihumaneness [antihumanismo] notes, from the interests of coexistence, peace and social balance."

"The profits amassed at the cost of someone else's pain," the Mexican newspaper notes, "constitute the debts of the rich, and these will be paid someday. History does not forget. It remains silent but saves the wealth of injustice among its negative reserves." The editorial concludes that "being in the vicinity of a nation so full of needs constitutes a pending bill for the United States. We must not be a simple consumption market for transnational consortiums. We do not merely represent numbers and accounts. We are a great country cheated of the technical resources it needs to develop or to which these resources have been sold at too dear a price."

$2-BILLION TRADE DEFICIT IN 1978 REPORTED

PA130146 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0017 GMT 13 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Mexico City, 12 Feb (EFE)--The Mexican Foreign Trade Institute (IMCE) reported today that Mexico had a trade deficit of $2.124 billion in 1978. The report adds that the deficit is greater than that registered in 1977, which amounted to $1,394,600,000.

According the IMCE, Mexican imports amounted to $7.562 billion while exports were $5.438 billion. Mexico obtained an income of $1.663 billion from the sale of crude oil in 1978. This amount represents 30.6 percent of the country's total exports. Other important export products were: coffee ($329 million), machinery and parts ($318 million), bulk cotton $114 million) and fresh and frozen shrimp ($96 million).

ROYO INAUGURATES PRD HEADQUARTERS IN COCLE

PA081246 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 0154 GMT 8 Feb 79 PA

[Speech by President Aristides Royo at inauguration of Democratic Revolutionary Party headquarters in Penonome, Cocle Province--live]

[Excerpts] The Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD] is no more than a revolutionary government that has decided now, after 10 years, to organize itself politically into a party. This will continue creating expectation. The people will say that the president should not meddle in politics and will ask why the president is conducting a political campaign and speaking in favor of the party. What we have been doing is speaking in favor of the process virtually since its beginning. We have been working in this process which each day is joined by more patriotic people. With every day that passes we want to have more members. Of course, we want those who have worked with us for the past 10 years and all those who want to work during the next 6 years and 6 years more, generation after generation, so that they join the ranks of this great party.

The people want to know what the president is doing. The people expect the president, his ministers and other top government officials not to participate in politics and to leave politics to the politicians--petty politicians, I would say. Naturally, after participating in politics, but in a new and different type of politics, we, the government which inherited the foundation and fruits of what Gen Omar Torrijos created, made the decision to organize the PRD. But they do not want the government or the president to meddle in politics. I would like to know if they would ask leaders of political parties in Colombia, Venezuela or Italy, some of whom are heads of state, ministers and congressmen, not to be politicians. I would like to know if the day after tomorrow we could go up to President Carter and and tell him to give up being a member of the Democratic Party and not meddle in politics because he no longer represents any party. I would like to say the same thing to the head of the Austrian Government--that he no longer represents his party because he is head of state and absolutely impartial and must withdraw from political activities and leave the party in the hands of persons who hold no public office. We could say the same thing to every head of state who has reached power through a political party.

We are in power because of an organization, a political movement that has existed for more than a decade, that began to educate the people politically, opening their eyes to a new Panamanian conscience. This organization, this movement, this leadership is now being turned into a political party. When this political party which supports our government has a leader who is the president of the republic and other leaders such as the ministers, they demand that we not participate in politics. I do not want to think that such a demand or complaint is meant to restrain our participation in politics. By the way, I am telling them that they are not going to stop us. I do not want to think that criticism of our activities is meant to stop the PRD's registration or weaken the party supporting our revolutionary process, because they are not going to see that either. I prefer to think in good faith that what those parties are really afraid of is that in the electoral process, campaigns and elections, in which Panamanians decide their destiny, the government will revert to past customs in which the people were enclosed in corrals, votes were bought, votes were counted hastily during the morning mist, candidates to congress were nominated by pointing a finger at the one chosen and big electoral frauds were carried out. It is not worth the time to continue remembering these things.

However, we want to assure them that they need not be afraid because now we have a government and a party that supports the government which is aware of its popular support. The government and the party know that they have the support of vast sectors of the population and that we are anxiously waiting for time to pass to face one another in the electoral campaign.

We will show them that these meetings are spontaneous and that they are not filled with public employees, although there are public employees who willingly support us. In the same manner we want to show them with votes that when the time comes to count and preside over the electoral process, the voting and counting of votes, it will act with absolute impartiality. We could never approve a law on political parties and later say that the government is not participating.

I am sure that the parties that today are criticizing the government because of these meetings would say nothing if we only had 20 persons listening to us at these meetings. They would say that we did not have the power or the capacity to gather people in our meetings. They are deeply hurt because we are gathering large crowds. They spent 10 years saying that the country had a dictatorship and asking for a law on political parties. They were invited to sit down with us and discuss the rules of the game for the electoral process and the registration of political parties. Today, those parties that said we had a dictatorship because there were no political parties have the law on political parties and all the facilities to organize and to hold meetings and demonstrations. For 10 years they said that they were the only ones who represented the people, and not us. Well, we are waiting for them to put the people in the streets. We are waiting for them to hold meetings and demonstrations and to proceed to their parties' registration.

They used to say that there was a dictatorship because there were no political parties. Now that we have parties and they realize that the people are supporting them, some of those parties do not even want to register, alleging that they are political parties in their own right. They claim that they do not have to comply with any electoral law. Some parties are arguing that the quota of 30,000 members is too high, but in 1952, when the quota was established at 45,000 members per party, it was not too high because then they were part of the power structure. Now it hurts them because they know it is going to be hard to register 30,000 members. Now they do not have pretexts because they have political parties, the registration process, constitutional amendments, direct elections for 1984, participation in legislative tasks and in choosing the representatives and legislators and also the separation of the executive branch from the legislative branch. They also have the electoral law, but now that they do not have popular support they say that they will not participate because we do not have a democracy. The only thing they need now is to sit down with us at a table and courteously ask us to hand over power to them. But in the same courteous manner we are going to tell them: No, let them gain power with votes. [applause]

The other fear they have which I would like to eliminate tonight is that the president and the ministers are devoting all our energy to politics to the neglect of hospitals, roads and schools and that we do not do our government duties now that we are engaged in politics. Let me tell you that we are doing this in our spare time.

Therefore, we combine work with political activity. However, we never neglect the tasks that we are obliged to fulfill as a ruler. Therefore, you may forget your fears that this government is going to play electoral tricks, because we will never permit that. As the president of all Panamanians, as a president who has a party which we would like to be the party of the broad Panamanian majority, we say that you should not harbor such fears, that the votes will be counted with full impartiality, that we will call [elections]-- as we have done before, since we already have experience--and there has not been a single case of elections sponsored by this government in which the government could be accused of fraud.

The rectors of the continent's universities will come and we will call on people from the OAS and from the United Nations and from all the political parties participating in the elections to witness the vote count. And if they are going to take power from us, let them begin to demonstrate this now. Let them stage their demonstrations; and register, because the Panamanian people are no longer going to believe them. They are no longer going to believe excuses such as: We cannot meet a certain requirement; the quota is too high; the government is playing politics; let the government say it will not play politics; let the party be formed by people outside of government and then we will participate in the elections. If those are the arguments, we will say that those arguments, which are mere excuses, will no longer be believed by anyone, just as we are sure that even those who are saying this cannot believe themselves.

This government will continue moving. This government will continue to contribute to the welfare of our country. It will continue to struggle for development. But now that this government has a great platform of support, which is the warmth of the people, and we hope that it has been increased--that same popular warmth now translated into political action, now translated, because they asked for it to be so, into laws that permit political parties--we are going to the battle. We are going into the electoral contest.

Our government would be wrong to say that we have an electoral law and that we permit political parties if we did not also set the example by showing that, just as we permit any kind of political party other than those that declare themselves to be fascist or have fascist programs, so also the revolutionary government has its party that supports it--the party that inherited the struggles of General Torrijos, the party that will continue to consolidate the struggles, the party that is also struggling for the future and for the new generations of Panamanians. These are the promises that we will faithfully keep. Let them allow us to work. We will engage in politics. We will also do our work as rulers. We will generate honesty and probity in this country.

We believe strongly in ideological pluralism. We firmly believe in democracy, in a democracy that does not take us back to the chaos of 1968, a democracy such as has never been conceived of in our country. One thing that we will never, never do is use state funds to finance the party. We will never take clubs or rods into the streets to strike those who wish to hold meetings, demonstrations, gatherings or organize parties. Let all Panamanians be assured that we believe in a peaceful democracy in which all political organizations have the right to a place of leadership and the right to participate, in which those who believe in the tasks of the government and those who believe in Torrijist principles and ideals will also have the right to organize themselves into parties.

This is how we interpret democracy in this country--without advantages, without privileges, permitting all Panamanians to exercise freedom of association and the right to belong to the political parties of their preference. Let us hope that we will all contribute. Those who are as fervent believers in the PRD and who believe in the ideals and programs of other parties should also realize that the only way to reach power is to win over the man in the street, to win over the masses and to win the votes by means of the proper use of the popular tribunals and through the proper and in-depth exercise of what is understood to be democracy.

XEMANARIO DIRECTOR COMMENTS ON SUSPENSION OF PUBLICATION

PA130316 Panama City Radio Hogar in Spanish 1700 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text of letter addressed to Lucho Pimentel, commentator of the "Commentarios y Opiniones del Professor Don Lucho" program, by XEMANARIO director Juan Barrera Salamanca--read by Lucho Pimentel]

[Text] Panama, 10 February 1979

Dear fellow countryman:

The publication of XEMANARIO was suspended by the paid assassins of the military dictatorship--the members of the People's Party--in conspiracy with the frightened owners of the printing shop--Juan Barrera is referring here to the Chiaris [Pimentel says]. The reasons that the printing shop gives for its action are trivial. In the end, the true reasons for the suspension are far more serious and are direct attempts against freedom of speech and human rights in Panama.

For several weeks, the National Guard's G-2 office has been intimidating, slandering and publicly discrediting the director of XEMANARIO by using the anonymous columns of the newspapers it controls.

XEMANARIO's crime was that it did not respect the retreat to the garrisons and it touched on sensitive topics that the National Guard wanted Panamanians to forget. The relentless provocation did not yield the results expected by the G-2.

Meanwhile, the People's Party, communist--which brags of crushing the opponents of the regime by closing radio stations and programs, dissolving anti-Soviet rallies, suspending the licenses of radio commentators and even killing students--could not stand our opposition to any introduction of Russian or Cuban communism in our country, which was expressed in our XEMANARIO No 10. The People's Party exerted pressure on the government so that XEMANARIO would be repressed and silenced. The paid assassins of the military government, the members of the People's Party, were forced to directly pressure and intimidate the firm that printed the weekly paper and achieved their distorted objectives in a "clean" way.

Fellow countrymen [as heard], be on the alert. This new aggression against freedom of speech in Panama is part of a chain of violations of rights that favor the penetration of Soviet imperialism and permit the rising of the People's Party to absolute power. Let it be clear that XEMANARIO was not suspended because of cowardliness or economic difficulties. We will remain in the struggle for a sovereign, free and democratic fatherland. Sincerely,

[Signed] Juan Barrera Salamanca, director

ROYO, COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT TO MEET AT BORDER 3 MARCH

PA121630 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 12 Feb 79 pp 1, 24 PA

[Excerpts] Costa Rican Ambassador to Panama Alejandro Alvarado Piza has told this newspaper's assistant director, Leonidas Escobar, that "on 3 March the presidents of Costa Rica and Panama will meet to get to know each other personally, exchange viewpoints on matters of interest to both nations and sign a protocol for the establishment of the 'International Friendship Park' in the Atlantic border region."

Ambassador Alvarado Piza has held the post in Panama twice and has many friends here, knows our idiosyncrasies, our problems and his highly regarded in Panamanian official and social circles.

[Question] A meeting of the Panamanian and Costa Rican presidents at the border has been announced for the near future. When will it take place?

[Answer] I can inform you that it is entirely correct that the Panamanian and Costa Rican presidents will meet at the border on 3 March this year. They will go with their cabinets to meet personally and exchange viewpoints of much interest to the two countries. They also intend to inaugurate a road built in Costa Rican territory from Bri-Bri--the principal city in Talamanca--to the Costa Rican-Panamanian border, and also to sign protocols for the establishment of an International Friendship Park.

This park will come within the framework of the border integration policy and be a symbolic gesture of the excellent realtions between the two governments and the atmosphere of fraternity and good will to prevail at the meeting of Presidents Aristides Royo and Rodrigo Carazo.

COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORTS ON PUBLIC DEBT

PA022229 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2315 GMT 1 Feb 79 PA

[Excerpt of press conference with Panamanian Comptroller General Damian Castillo on 1 February; place not given--recorded]

[Excerpt] Panama's public debt as of 31 December 1979 amounts to 2,371,100,000 balboas, broken down as follows: The central government owes 1,400,400,000 balboas, and the decentralized institutions owe970.7 million balboas. The internal debt of the central government amounts to 374.8 million balboas while the foreign debt amounts to 1,025,600,000, which adds up to the amount I mentioned earlier.

In the decentralized institutions, the internal debt amounts to 183 million balboas, while the foreign debt amounts to 787.7 million balboas, which gives us the total of 970.7 million balboas I mentioned earlier. In summary, in the central government and the decentralized institutions, the internal debt amounts to 557.8 million balboas while the foreign debt amounts to 1,813,300,000 balboas, which gives us, as I said earlier, a grand total of 2,371,100,000 balboas, the public debt of the Republic of Panama.

Within the internal debts, the central government has a debt of 374.8 million balboas of which, as I mentioned earlier, we have bonds for 173.2 million balboas, promisory notes for 180.9 million balboas, and other debts for 20.7 million balboas. It is necessary to report that the bonds and the promisory notes are included in the debt that we have with the Social Security Institute, which amounts to 164.9 million balboas. As is public knowledge, this debt is for the employers' share that the central government must pay to the Social Security Institute and which is paid in the form of bonds. In other words, payment is deferred because the contribution of the employees which is deducted every payperiod is paid in cash to the Social Security Institute every month.

COSTA RICA

MINISTER COMMENTS ON CIVIL GUARD REINFORCEMENTS, FSLN

PA130130 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2322 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] San Jose, 12 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--An undisclosed number of Civil Guardsmen have been sent to the nicaraguan border in view of the increased Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) hostilities against the Nicaraguan Army.

Public Security Minister Juan Jose Echeverria Brealey indicated that the deployment of military reinforcements is aimed at continuing to guarentee Costa Rica's neutrality in Nicaragua's domestic conflict, which has intensified since September 1978. Asked if he believes that Sunday's burial of a Sandinist in Costa Rica will further complicate the delicate relations with Nicaragua, the official said he does not think so. Costa Rica broke diplomatic relations with Nicaragua on 21 November following a border clash in which two Costa Rican Civil Guardsmen were killed.

Echeverria said that he will not impose limitations of any kind on the humanitarian aid given to the Nicaraguan combatants, regardless of which side they are on.

In the funeral, FSLN members paid homage to their comrade who was killed in a clash on Nicaraguan territory near the Costa Rican border on Friday. Minister Echeverria told ACAN-EFE that he does not like that type of situation, but he noted that the Sandinists who attended the funeral had taken asylum in Costa Rica a long time ago. He also revealed that when the guerrilla's body was brought into Costa Rica, the authorities confiscated the weapons from the guerrillas who accompanied the body. "The humanitarian aid cannot and must not be suspended. We have helped wounded guerrillas and even a Nicaraguan National Guardsmen," the official indicated.

NICARAGUA

ARMED INCIDENTS REPORTED IN MANAGUA, MATAGALPA

PA122005 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1816 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 12 Feb (LATIN)--National Guardsmen and individuals believed to be members of the Sandinist National Liberation Front exchanged fire in various planes in Nicaragua in the last few hours. Two civilians were wounded in one of these incidents in the Guanuca District of Matagalpa, 124 km from Managua. The Red Cross has reported that two other civilians were wounded by gunshot in an incident on the Managua-Granada road.

A police patrol was ambushed by civilians in southeast Managua. According to eyewitnesses, several guardsmen died. Police reinforcements did not find the attackers and a government light plane flew over the area warning the population by loudspeaker to evacuate the area because it was going to be bombed in an attempt to drive the attackers out. The threatened bombing did not take place, however.

GUNFIRE, BOMB EXPLOSIONS REPORTED IN LEON

PA122008 Bluefields Radio Atlantico in Spanish 1800 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Gunfire, bombs and fires were reported in Leon last night. Starting last night at 2000 in San Felipe, Zaragoza, Ermita de Dolores, El Coyolar and Reparto Vigil districts in Leon, loud bomb explosions were heard.

Fires were also set in the streets. Our reports say that the worst situation was in Reparto Vigil where there was an exchange of gunfire for several minutes between armed civilians and the military.

DETAILS ON AMBUSH OF MILITARY PATROL DISCLOSED

PA122006 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1853 GMT 12 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Managua, 12 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Four Nicaraguan Army soliders were killed last weekend when ambushed by unidentified persons on a lonely road south of this capital. The National Guard's Legal and Public Relations Office today disclosed that the ambush occurred on Saturday. Also killed was an unidentified person who attacked the military patrol.

The soldiers were ambushed while patrolling a rural southern zone of Managua Department. Two National Guardsmen were wounded there. The army's Information Office reported that the patrol was attacked from both sides of the road with fragmentation grenades and arms of different calibers.

The military casualties were identified as Cpl Alfonso Toruno, Cpl Antonio Jimenez Perez and Pedro Gaitan and Carlos Martinez, soldiers.

FOREIGN MINISTER REPLIES TO U.S. MEASURES

PA130421 Managua Domestic Services in Spanish 0340 GMT 13 Feb 79 PA

[Text] Due to its great importance and in order to inform the people, we present Foreign Minister Julio Quintana Villanueva, who offers concepts related to the latest statements made by the U.S. State Department:

[Begin Quintana recording] The Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry has officially received the statement made by a U.S. State Department spokesman during a news conference held on 8 February concerning our recent political negotiations. The Nicaraguan Government sincerely deplores the United States' decision to take measures that could affect the economic, political and social development of the least favored sectors of the Nicaraguan people.

Nevertheless, it respects free determination as a sovereign right of that friendly government. Our government reaffirms its faith in finding a peaceful solution to the Nicaraguan problems and concurs with the paragraphs of the State Department's message that state: We appeal to the other governments of the region to prevent contributions to a continuation or expansion of the violence while urging all Nicaraguans to avoid the temptation of seeking violent solutions to problems that are best solved through national consensus.

We are also very pleased with the U.S. State Department's statement that says: We would deplore any outbreak of terrorism or violence coming from anywhere that, in addition to the suffering and loss of life that it would cause, would only complicate the task of finding a peaceful solution to the Nicaraguan crisis.

Concerning the State Department's affirmation of the reasons that prompted the three-nation negotiating group to suspend their efforts at friendly cooperation, the political commission appointed by the National and Legal Board of Directors of the Nationalist Liberal Party to represent it in those negotiations will give an opportune reply to the U.S. spokesman. Thank you. [end recording]

COOPERATION PROTOCOL SIGNED WITH BULGARIA

FL122331 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2230 GMT 12 Feb 79 FL

[Text] The 12th session of the Cuban-Bulgarian intergovernmental commission on cooperation has concluded with the signing of the final protocol by Flavio Bravo, member of the PCC Central Committee and Council of State and vice president of the Council of Ministers, and Andrey Lukanov, member of the Bulgarian Communist Party Central Committee and deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers. The signing ceremony was presided over by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, member of the PCC Politburo; Rafael Francia Mestre, minister of agriculture; and Lester Rodriguez, minister of the iron and steel machinery industry.

HUNGARIAN DELEGATION ARRIVES IN HAVANA

FL122124 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2103 GMT 12 Feb 79 FL

[Juan Jose Fernandez report]

[Text] Gyula Szeker, vice chairman of the Hungarian Council of Ministers, has arrived in our capital at the head of a top-level governmental delegation to attend the eighth session of the Cuban-Hungarian committee on economic, scientific and technical cooperation. They were welcomed at Jose Marti International Airport by PCC Central Committee members Jose R. Fernandez, vice president of the Council of Ministers, and Asela de los Santos, minister of education. The Hungarian delegation includes Deputy Ministers Jeno Tordai of foreign trade and Mikos Gacsi of the metallurgy and machine industry. Others present at the welcoming were Ernesto Melendez, vice president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation, and Vice Ministers Manuel Garcia of communications and Pedro Fernandez of the iron and steel machinery industry.

MIRET MEETS WITH LEBANESE DELEGATION

FL122318 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2230 GMT 12 Feb 79 FL

[Text] Pedro Miret, member of the PCC Politburo, has met with the delegation from the Lebanese National Movement which is visiting our country in response to an invitation from the PCC. Attending the meeting were Georges Hawi, vice president of the Central Council of that movement and deputy secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Party [position as heard], who heads tne delegation, and (Ibraham Rautun), vice president of the Central Committee of the Lebanese National Movement and member of the Supreme Council of the Socialist National Party.

Others attending for the Cuban side included Lionel Soto, member of the Central Committee, and other officials of that committee. During the meeting, which took place in a cordial atmosphere of mutual understanding, numerous topics of interest to the Lebanese National Movement, the PCC, and the struggle of the Arab peoples against imperialism, Zionism and reactionary forces were discussed.

BLAS ROCA MEETS WITH OUTGOING GUYANESE ENVOY

FL121949 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1903 GMT 12 Feb 79 FL

[Text] Blas Roca Calderio, member of the PCC Politburo and president of the People's Government National Assembly, today received Frank Campbell, ambassador of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to our country, in a farewell visit. The friendly visit took place upon Campbell's having concluded his tenure as ambassador to Cuba. He began his tenure in March 1976.